What Is Claimed Is:

1   1. A method of allowing a subscriber to access a service, said method being

2   performed in a service selection gateway (SSG), said method comprising:

3   receiving a first set of access addresses associated with said service;

4   forwarding a first plurality of packets, each of said first plurality of packets is

5   destined to one of said first set of access addresses such that said subscriber can access

6   said service;

7   receiving a request to change said first set of access addresses to a new set of

8   access addresses; and

9   forwarding a second plurality of packets, each of said second plurality of packets

10   being destined to one of said new set of access addresses.

1   2. The method of claim 1, further comprising maintaining a service information

2   which determines whether each packet is forwarded or not, wherein said service

3   information comprises said first set of access addresses in response to said receiving a

4   first set of access addresses, and said service information comprises said new set of access

5   addresses in response to said receiving a request to change.

1   3. The method of claim 2, wherein said request to change comprises a request to

2   add a new address to said first set of addresses.

1   4. The method of claim 3, wherein a subscriber system used by said subscriber

2   communicates directly with a user system having said new address when said service

3   information comprises said new set of access addresses.

1   5. The method of claim 4, wherein said maintaining comprises storing in a service

2   object the addresses of a set of servers said subscriber system is permitted to access.

1   6. The method of claim 3, further comprising:

2   receiving another request specifying deletion of said new address; and

3   removing said new address from said new set of access addresses such that said

4   service information contains only said first set of access addresses.

1   7. The method of claim 3, further comprising:

2   maintaining a contacts information specifying a set of contacts permitted to change

3   addresses associated with each service; and

4   examining said contact information to determine whether said request to change

5   is received from a system permitted to change said first set of access addresses.

1   8. A service selection gateway (SSG) allowing a subscriber to access a service,

2   said SSG comprising:

3   means for receiving a first set of access addresses associated with said service;

4   means for forwarding a first plurality of packets, each of said first plurality of

5   packets is destined to one of said first set of access addresses such that said subscriber can

6   access said service;

7   means for receiving a request to change said first set of access addresses to a new

8   set of access addresses; and

9   means for forwarding a second plurality of packets, each of said second plurality

10   of packets being destined to one of said new set of access addresses.

1   9.   The service selection gateway of claim 8, further comprising means for

2   maintaining a service information which determines whether each packet is forwarded or

3   not, wherein said service information comprises said first set of access addresses upon

4   receiving said first set of access addresses, and said service information comprises said

5   new set of access addresses upon receiving said request to change.

1   10.   The service selection gateway of claim 9, wherein said request to change

2   comprises a request to add a new address to said first set of addresses.

1   11. The service selection gateway of claim 10,wherein a subscriber system used

2   by said subscriber communicates directly with a user system having said new address

3   when said service information comprises said new set of access addresses.

1   12.   The service selection gateway of claim 11, wherein said means for

2   maintaining comprises means for storing in a service object the addresses of a set of

3   servers said subscriber system is permitted to access.

1   13. The service selection gateway of claim 10, further comprising:

2   means for receiving another request specifying deletion of said new address; and

3   means for removing said new address from said new set of access addresses such

4   that said service information contains only said first set of access addresses.

1   14. The service selection gateway of claim 10, further comprising:

2   means for maintaining a contacts information specifying a set of contacts permitted

3   to change addresses associated with each service; and

4   means for examining said contact information to determine whether said request

5   to change is received from a system permitted to change said first set of access addresses.

1   15. A computer readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for

2   causing a service selection gateway (SSG) to allow a subscriber to access a service,

3   wherein execution of said one or more sequences of instructions by one or more processors

4   contained in said SSG causes said one or more processors to perform the actions of:

5   receiving a first set of access addresses associated with said service;

6   forwarding a first plurality of packets, each of said first plurality of packets is

7   destined to one of said first set of access addresses such that said subscriber can access

8   said service;

9   receiving a request to change said first set of access addresses to a new set of

10   access addresses; and

11   forwarding a second plurality of packets, each of said second plurality of packets

12   being destined to one of said new set of access addresses.

1   16. The computer readable medium of claim 15, further comprising maintaining

2   a service information which determines whether each packet is forwarded or not, wherein

3   said service information comprises said first set of access addresses in response to said

4   receiving a first set of access addresses, and said service information comprises said new

5   set of access addresses in response to said receiving a request to change.

1   17. The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein said request to change

2   comprises a request to add a new address to said first set of addresses.

1   18. The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein a subscriber system used

2   by said subscriber communicates directly with a user system having said new address

3   when said service information comprises said new set of access addresses.

1   19. The computer readable medium of claim 18, wherein said maintaining

2   comprises storing in a service object the addresses of a set of servers said subscriber

3   system is permitted to access.

1   20. The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein said maintaining further

2   comprises:

3   creating a host object when said subscriber is authenticated;

4   creating a service object for each of a plurality of services; and

5   using a connection object to map said host object to one of said plurality of

6   services said subscriber is permitted to access.

1   21. The computer readable medium of claim 17, further comprising:

2   receiving another request specifying deletion of said new address; and

3   removing said new address from said new set of access addresses such that said

4   service information contains only said first set of access addresses.

1   22. The computer readable medium of claim 17, further comprising:

2   maintaining a contacts information specifying a set of contacts permitted to change

3   addresses associated with each service; and

4   examining said contact information to determine whether said request to change

5   is received from a system permitted to change said first set of access addresses.

1   23. A service selection gateway (SSG) allowing a subscriber to access a service,

2   said SSG comprising:

3   a forwarding engine forwarding packets according to a service information;

4   a memory storing said service information comprising a first set of access

5   addresses associated with said service such that said subscriber can access said service

6   based on packets forwarded by said forwarding engine;

7   an input interface receiving a request to change said first set of access addresses

8   to a new set of access addresses; and

9   a configuration logic changing said service information such that said new set of

10   access addresses are associated with said service, whereby said subscriber uses said

11   service with said new set of access addresses.

1   24. The SSG of claim 23, further comprising:

2   a parser receiving a packet and determining whether said packet contains said

3   request or is related to a routing protocol or is to be forwarded, said parser sending said

4   packet to said forwarding engine if said packet is to be forwarded, said parser sending

5   said packet to said configuration logic is said packet contains said request; and

6   a routing logic receiving said packet if said packet is related to said routing

7   protocol, said routing logic configuring a routing table according to said packet.

1   25. The SSG of claim 23, further comprising a contacts table which indicates a set

2   of contacts permitted to change addresses associated with each service, and wherein said

3   configuration logic examines said contact table to determine whether said request to

4   change is received from a system permitted to change said first set of access addresses.

1   26. The SSG of claim 23, wherein said request to change comprises a request to

2   add a new address to said first set of addresses.

1   27. The SSG of claim 26, wherein a subscriber system used by said subscriber

2   communicates directly with a user system having said new address when said service

3   information comprises said new set of access addresses.

1   28. The SSG of claim 26, wherein said input interface receives another request

2   specifying deletion of said new address, and said configuration logic removes said new

3   address from said new set of access addresses such that said service information contains

4   only said first set of access addresses.